

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DPW-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9517

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 13222

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ID

SUBJ: SUHARTO LETTER TO BURU ISLAND DETAINEE

REF: JAKARTA 12266

1. SUMMARY: DEPUTY KOPKAMTIB CHIEF SUDOMO ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 8 THAT PRESIDENT SUHARTO HAS SENT A PERSONAL LETTER TO PRAMUDYA ANATA TUR, THE PROMINENT WRITER WHO IS A POLITICAL PRISONER ON BURU ISLAND, CONCERNING REPENTENCE FOR HIS COMMUNIST ERRORS. SUDOMO ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT PACKAGE OF BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS BEING SENT TO OTHER WRITERS AND ARTISTS ON BURU, AND THAT GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKING PLANS FOR SOLVING PRISONER PROBLEM. HOWEVER, HE SAID, PRISONER PROBLEM IS AN INTERNAL MATTER AND WILL NOT BE INFLUENCED BY OUTSIDE PRESSURES. LETTER FROM SUHARTO AND PACKAGE ARE EVIDENTLY GESTURES DESIGNED TO HELP PORTRAY MORE POSITIVE, HUMANITARIAN APPROACH TOWARD PRISONERS. FOLLOWING BASED ON REPORTS IN KOMPAS, BERITA YUDHA, AND SUARA KARYA, NOVEMBER 9. END SUMMARY.

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2. SUDOMO SAID PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S LETTER TO

PRAMUDYA (A CLASS B DETAINEE WHO IS OFTEN FEATURE IN CRITICAL FOREIGN COMMENT ON GOI PRISONER POLICY) AND PANXAGE WERE RESULT OF GENERAL SUMITRO'S VISIT TO BURU IN OCTOBER DURING WHICH E MET PRAMUDYA AND OTHER INTELLECTUALS AND ARTISTS (REFTEL). PACKAGE CONTAINED BOOKS, ARTIST MATERIALS ANE EYEGLASSES.

3. IN PORTION OF SUHARTO'S LETTER TO PRAMUDYA WHICH SUDOMO READ, PRESIDENT WROTE "IT IS NATURAL FOR MANKIND TO ERR; BUT IT IS ALSO NATURAL AND NECESSARY TO HONESTLY STRIVE TO DISCOVER AGAIN THE CORRECT PATH". PRESIDENT ALSO ASKED FOR GOD'S SUPPORT IN THIS EFFORT.

4. SUDOMO SAID GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TOWARD PRISONERS IS TO SHOW THEM THE CORRECT WAY, SO THEY MAY BECOME GOOD CITIZENS. HE ALSO SAID THAT A PLAN WAS BEING PREPARED FOR SOLVING PRISONER PROBLEM AS RESULT OF SUMITRO'S VISIT TO BURU. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED INTERNAL NATURE OF PRISONER PROBLEM, AND THAT IT WOULD BE SOLVED BY INDONESIA ALONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES, NOT BY OUTSIDE PRESSURE.

5. COMMENT: SUHARTO'S FATHERLY PREACHMENTS TO PRAMUDYA AND THE SYMBOLIC PACKAGE ARE FURTHER EVIDENCE OF GOI EFFORT TO PRESENT ITS POLICY TOWARD POLITICAL PRISONERS IN A MORE POSITIVE, HUMANITARIAN LIGHT. NEW PLAN FOR SOLUTION OF PRISONER PROBLEM TO WHICH SUDOMO REFERRED IS APPARENTLY SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS BEING PREPARED BY TEAM OF PROMINENT EDUCATORS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS WHO ACCOMPANIED SUMITRO ON HIS OCTOBER TRIP TO BURU (REFTEL).

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